

NEWS RELEASE

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Suffolk Plastic Bag Drive for 2010-11

SUFFOLK, VA (November 4, 2010) — On the heels of the 2010 Cans for Cash City Recycling Challenge, Suffolk is turning its attention to the recycling of plastic bags.

The City of Suffolk, Suffolk Clean Community Commission and Suffolk Public Schools are collaborating with Trex Company, the nation's largest manufacturer of wood-alternative decking and railing, for its third annual plastic bag recycling drive. The drive starts on America Recycles Day (November 15, 2010) and ends on Earth Day (April 22, 2011).

"Suffolk Public Schools is thrilled that our students and staff will have the opportunity to play such a strong role in this effort to save the planet," said Bethanne Bradshaw, Public Information and Community Relations Officer for Suffolk Public Schools. "The plastic bag recycling project will provide our students, staff and school families a real-life, hands-on lesson in improving the environment."

Since they are lightweight, plastic bags are the debris most likely to fly away from landfills – settling instead in trees, storm drains, beaches and the ocean. In fact, plastic bags make up over 10 percent of washed-up debris polluting the U.S. coastline.

The schools participating in the drive include: Southwestern, Kilby Shores, Nansemond Parkway, Florence Bowser, Robertson, Elephant's Fork and Mt. Zion Elementary Schools; John F. Kennedy Middle, Turlington Woods and Nansemond River, Lakeland and King's Fork High Schools.

Hattie Lester, Litter Control Coordinator for the City of Suffolk, is spearheading the drive. She is anticipating a record number of bags to be recycled this year.

“What better way to celebrate America Recycles Day than to start our plastic bag recycling drive in the schools,” said Lester. “The City of Suffolk is excited and extremely grateful for the schools that have come forward to say they will join in to rid our waste stream of plastic bags. This is vital since plastic bags don’t biodegrade.”

Each year, Trex utilizes more than one billion recycled grocery bags to create its environmentally friendly decking and railing products, keeping the plastic bags out of landfills locally and across the country. By working with Trex, local schools and students learn the importance of recycling, keep plastic bags out of landfills and are rewarded for their efforts.

“Trex appreciates Suffolk City Schools’ continued support and dedication,” said Amanda Harrington, Materials Resources Coordinator for Trex. “We anticipate another successful year, and are thankful for the students’ and administration’s ongoing efforts.”

The participating schools have been placed in two groups. Group One includes the elementary schools; Group Two includes the middle, high, and alternative schools. Trex will award a bench to the winning school in each group. Winners will be determined by the number of bags per capita this year, which means the most number of bags the schools collect based on the population of the schools.

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